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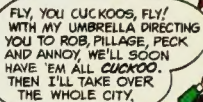
**SOS--SUPERMAN! URGENT! HELP US
OR EARTH WILL DIE!**



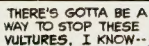
**BUT THE MAN OF STEEL
CAN'T RESPOND!
HE'S ON THE MOON--
FIGHTING FOR HIS
OWN LIFE!**



in
"The CUCKOO CUCKOOS"

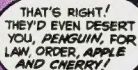


WE? WHAT WE? THE PENGUIN IS NEVER A "WE." IT IS I WHO AM THE MASTERMIND, NOT YOU, BIRDBRAIN. ERGO, IT IS I WHO SHALL PROFIT MOST HANDSOMELY FROM THIS CAPER. IF YOU THINK YOU'RE ON THE SAME PLANE AS ME, YOU MUST BE A CUCKOO. CUCKOO.



HEY, YOU BIRDS!! LOOK!
DELICIOUS HOSTESS®
FRUIT PIES...

NO! NO!! NOT REAL
FRUIT FILLING!! TENDER,
LIGHT CRUST!! LUSCIOUS
APPLE AND CHERRY!
MY CLOCKS ARE NOT THAT
CLICKOO THAT THEY'D
PASS UP DELICIOUS
HOSTESS FRUIT
PIES!



OKAY, PENGUIN,
LET'S SEE YOU WADDLE
OFF TO JAIL.



[®] Hostess is a registered trademark of ITT Continental Baking Company.

ROCKETED AS A BABY FROM THE
EXPLODING PLANET KRYPTON,
KAL-EL GREW TO MANHOOD ON EARTH--
WHOSE YELLOW SUN AND LIGHTER GRAVITY
GAVE HIM FANTASTIC SUPER-POWERS!
IN THE CITY OF METROPOLIS, HE
POSES AS MILD-MANNERED TV
NEWSMAN CLARK KENT--
AND BATTLES EVIL
ALL OVER EARTH
AND BEYOND
AS...

SUPERMAN

Created by
JERRY SIEGEL &
JOE SHUSTER

THIS IS
MORGAN EDGE
WITH THE WOBS
ELEVEN O'CLOCK
REPORT!

THE MAJOR--
AND SOLE-- STORY
TONIGHT IS THE WAVE
OF DESTRUCTION
SWEEPING THE WORLD,
FROM TORNADOES AND
FLOODS ALONG THE
EASTERN SEABOARD
OF THE UNITED
STATES--

--TO THE EARTHQUAKES
AND TIDAL WAVES HITTING
EUROPE AND THE REST OF
PLANET EARTH! TO MAKE
A BAD SITUATION
WORSE--

--ALL OF EARTH'S
SUPER-HEROES HAVE
DISAPPEARED!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THIS MAY WELL BE--

EARTH'S LAST DAY!

GERRY CONWAY, AUTHOR CURT SWAN AND FRANCISCO CHIARAMONTE, ARTISTS
CLEM ROBINS, LETTERER JERRY SERPE, COLORIST JULIUS SCHWARTZ, EDITOR

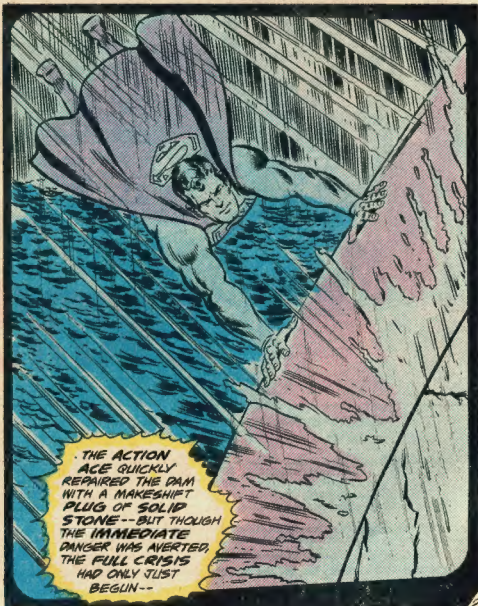
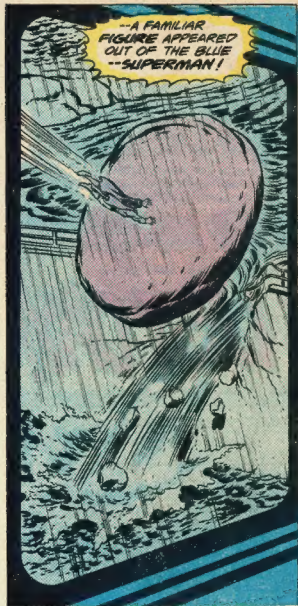
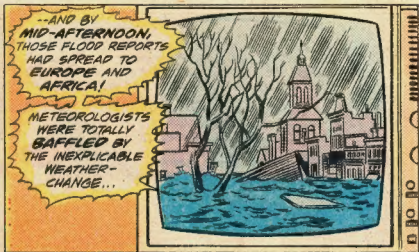
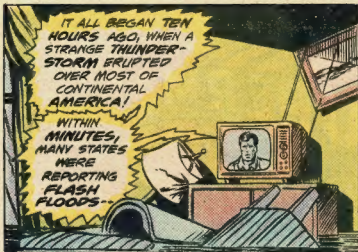
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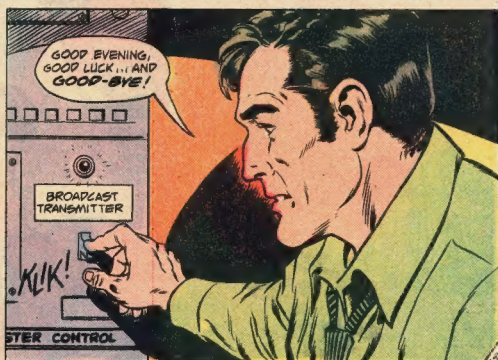
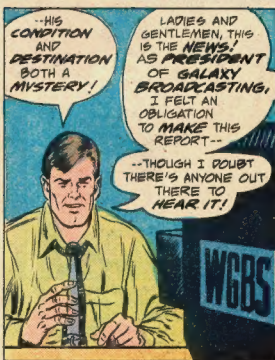
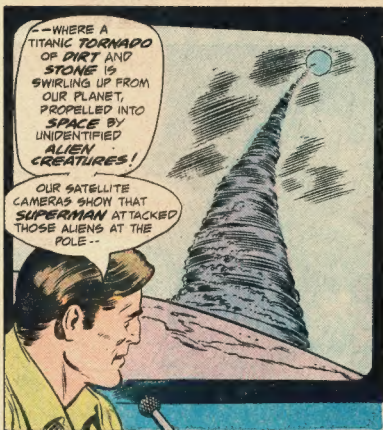
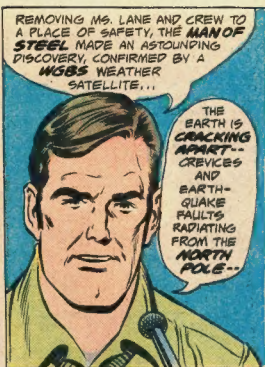
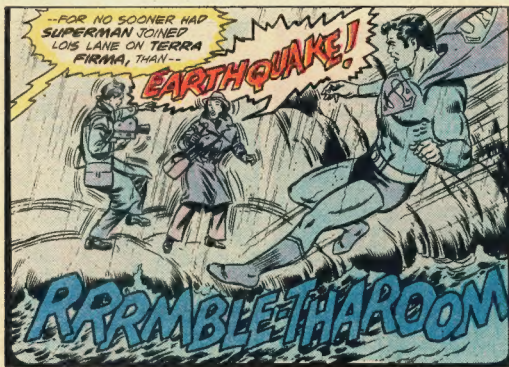
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THERE IS A STILLNESS IN THE
WGBS STUDIO, THE STILLNESS
OF IMPENDING DISASTER...

SO THAT'S
IT, THE STORY'S
OVER! ALL THE
PUSHING FOR
POWER,
THE RUTHLESSNESS,
THE POLITICS,
THE AMBITION, THE
MONEY--

--IT'S ALL
USELESS
NOW! THE
LAST DAY!
YOU ALWAYS
THINK THE
WORLD WILL
GO ON
FOREVER,
PARTICULARLY
WITH YOU
IN IT--

--AND
THEN, ONE
DAY, THE
WORLD
STOPS!

WELL, SO
LONG, WGBS!
SO LONG,
WORLD!

CAN'T
SAY IT
HASN'T
BEEN
FUN...
WHILE
IT
LASTED!

HE'S ALWAYS BEEN A HARD MAN,
MORGAN EDGE--BUT UNDERNEATH THE
HARDNESS, HE'S ALSO A SENSITIVE
MAN...

TONIGHT, HE THINKS LESS OF HIMSELF
THAN HE DOES OF THOSE HE'S LOVED:
HIS MOTHER, HIS FRIENDS--

--EVEN HIS EMPLOYEES. HE'S TRIED
TO CALL HIS MOTHER, BUT THE TELEPHONE
LINES ARE DOWN...

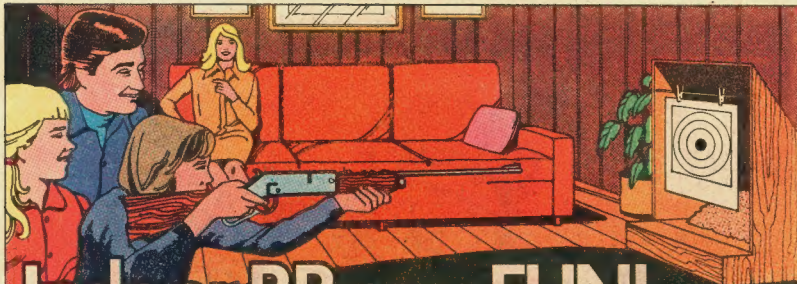
...AND THE STREETS...

...WELL, THE
STREETS
ARE WHY
HE'S HERE,
ON THE
GALAXY
BUILDING
ROOF...WHY
THEY'RE
ALL HERE
TONIGHT,
WATCHING...
AND
WAITING...

THE
FLOOD'S UP
TO THE THIRD-
STORY MARK
--AND STILL
RISING!
WON'T BE LONG
NOW, MR.
EDGE!

NOT
LONG AT
ALL...

MORGAN EDGE HAS
ALWAYS BEEN A
HARD MAN, BUT AS
HE CRIES TONIGHT,
HE CRIES NOT
FOR HIMSELF, BUT
FOR THE WORLD...



Indoor BB gun FUN! It's a whole new GAME!



The easy-cocking
Crosman Model 73.

Crosman BB and Pellet Guns and Safe Shooter Games!

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Safe Shooters Book!

Show Mom and Dad how you can become a Safe Shooter! Get game details too! Send 25¢ today for the Crosman Safe Shooters Book. It tells you and your whole family how to get the most fun out of a Crosman air gun.



"BB
Billiards"



"Air
Raid"



"BB
Baseball"



"Shooting
Stars"

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City

State Zip

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A home study program in association with Cleveland Engineering Inst.

AT THAT MOMENT, 240,000 MILES AWAY, AT THE FAR END OF THE TWISTING TORNADO OF ROCK AND STONE PLUNDERING PLANET EARTH--

--INSIDE THE SILENT SATELLITE WE'VE ALWAYS CALLED THE MOON...

YOU'RE THE ONES TEARING MY PLANET APART? YOU--?

IS IT SO DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE, SUPERMAN? WE LUNARIANS ARE THE RIGHTFUL OWNERS OF YOUR PLANET'S MASS!

WE ARE MERELY CLAIMING OUR HERITAGE-- THAT LAND WHICH IS PROPERLY OURS!

ONCE, LUNA WAS A MUCH LARGER WORLD, TILL PART OF IT BECAME CONTAMINATED WITH A BACTERIAL INFECTION YOU CALL VEGETATION!

THE POLLUTED PORTION WAS DETACHED, REFORMED INTO THE GLOBAL BODY YOU CALL EARTH --BILLIONS OF SOLAR YEARS AGO!

SO YOU SEE, MY TERRAN STRONGMAN, EARTH IS OURS --AND WE WANT IT BACK!

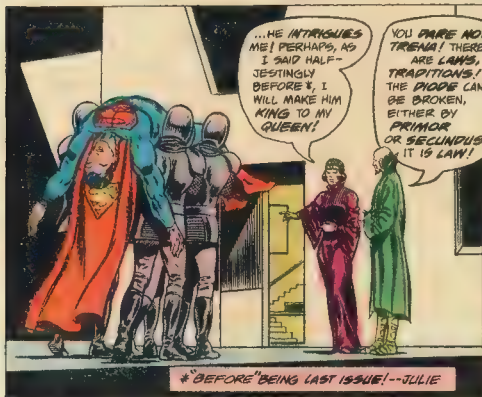
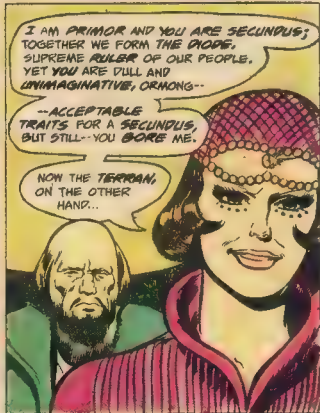
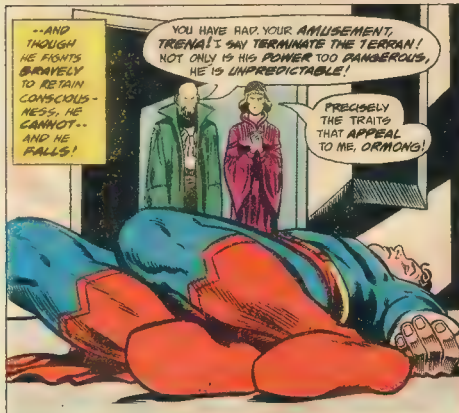
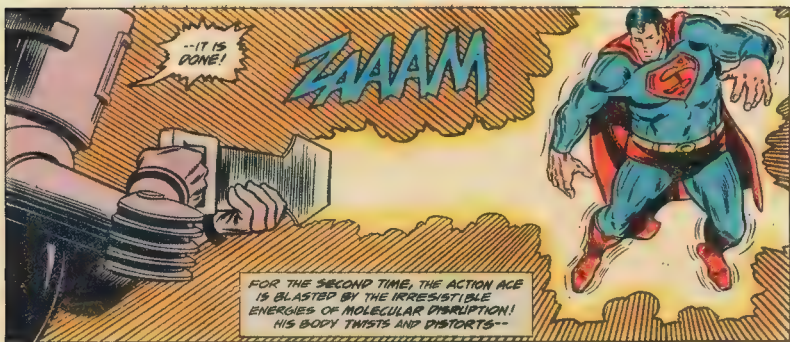
OVER-MY-DEAD-BODY!

I'VE HEARD ENOUGH! YOU PEOPLE THINK YOU'RE GODS, FREE TO DESTROY A RACE OF THREE BILLION SOULS, FOR YOUR OWN RACIAL EXPANSION!

WHATEVER YOUR REASONS, THAT'S GENOCIDE --A POLITE NAME FOR MASS MURDER!

WHAM





*"BEFORE" BEING LAST ISSUE!--JULIE

MEANWHILE, BACK ON EARTH, IN A FLOODED METROPOLIS AWAITING THE LAST CRUSHING TSUNAMI!! ...

GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST--
GIVE ME YOUR HAND BEFORE YOU
DROWN! DIDN'T YOU EVER LEARN
TO SWIM? IN MY DAY,
A REPORTER--

YEAH,
CHIEF, I
KNOW--

A COLOSSAL TIDAL WAVE--JULIE

IN YOUR DAY, A REPORTER
WAS READY FOR ANYTHING!
ACTUALLY, I'M A FIRST-CLASS
SWIMMER--BUT TELL ME, PERRY,
DID ANY REPORTER EVER
HAVE TO DEAL
WITH THIS?

BLAST!
MY CIGAR'S
WET!

NO, JIMMY,
ALL WE HAD
TO WORRY
ABOUT WAS
WORLD WAR
TWO--

--AND AT MOMENTS LIKE
THIS, D-DAY SEEMS LIKE
A SUNDAY PICNIC!

ANY IDEA WHAT'S HAPPENED
TO SUPERMAN AND THE OTHER
SUPER-HEROES?

NONE!
I'VE TRIED
CALLING
SUPERMAN
WITH MY SIGNAL-
WATCH--BUT
ZILCH!

AS FOR
GREEN LANTERN,
FLASH, AND THE
REST OF THE
JUSTICE
LEAGUE--
IF THEY HAVEN'T
ARRIVED BY NOW,
MY GUESS IS
THEY'VE BEEN
DEFEATED--

--BY
WHOEVER IS
RESPONSIBLE
FOR ALL THIS!
CHIEF, THIS
MAY BE
THE
END--

--AND I
WANT YOU TO
KNOW,
YOU'RE THE
BEST
EDITOR A
GUY COULD
EVER WORK
WITH! I MEAN
THAT!

THANKS,
JIM! FOR THAT,
I'LL OVERLOOK
THE FACT YOU
CALLED ME
CHIEF--
TWICE!

YOU'RE
NOT BAD
YOUR-
SELF!

AND WHAT OF THE WORLD'S SUPER-GUARDIANS?
WHAT OF THE BATMAN, DARKKNIGHT DETECTIVE OF
GOTHAM CITY?

RAVAGED BY EARTH-
QUAKES, GOTHAM
IS IN CHAOS--

--AND THOSE FEW MEN AND
WOMEN NOT HARMED BY
FALLING RUDDLE ARE DOING
THEIR BEST TO HELP THOSE
WHO ARE! AMONG THE
HELPERS: A BUTLER NAMED
ALFRED--

--AND AN INDUSTRIAL
MAGNATE NAMED
BRUCE WAYNE!

CONTINUED ON SEP PAGE FOLLOWING

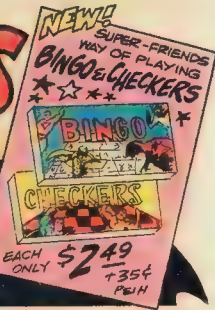


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The Famous Clark Bars. They're all so rich, and so good, you may have trouble making up your mind.



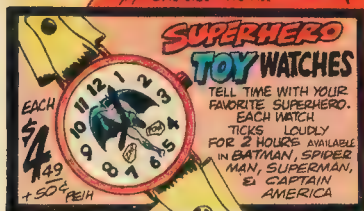
SUPER CAPES



SEND TO:
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P.O. BOX 777
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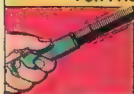


PLEASE RUSH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO ME:
☐ WALLET: 2.98 ☐ CAPE: 3.98 EACH ☐ SUPERMAN ☐ BATMAN
☐ WATCH: 4.99 ☐ BINGO: 2.84 ☐ CHECKERS: 2.84
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Fires real bullets! Extra red explosive! 2" long. Barrel opens to load, hammer cocks & fires when trigger is pulled. Ramrod & ammo included.
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STRONG ARMS

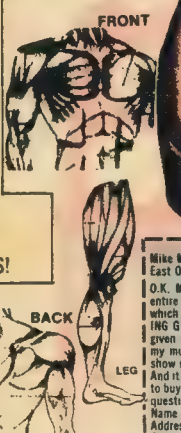
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NOTHING ELSE TO BUY!

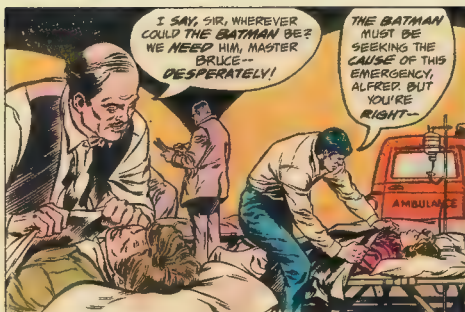
— MAIL NO-RISK TRIAL COUPON NOW!

Mike Marvel, Dept. 138-160 Amherst Street
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O.K. Mike Marvel, enclosed is my \$3.98. Send me your entire Scientific Isometric Dynaflex System in one book which includes a chapter on: "SECRETS OF ATTRACTIVE GIRLS." I must agree that the Dynaflex method has given me powerfully toned muscles, full strength in my muscles, made me so strong that I can be proud to show my friends how strong I am. And it must do this in 10 minutes a day — with nothing else to buy — now or in the future. I got my \$3.98 back — with no questions asked upon return of the book.

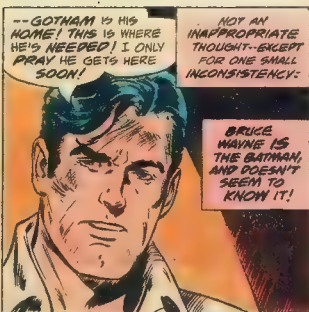
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

— SOLD ON MONEY BACK GUARANTEE —



I SAY, SIR, WHEREVER
COULD THE BATMAN BE?
WE NEED HIM, MASTER
BRUCE--
DESPERATELY!

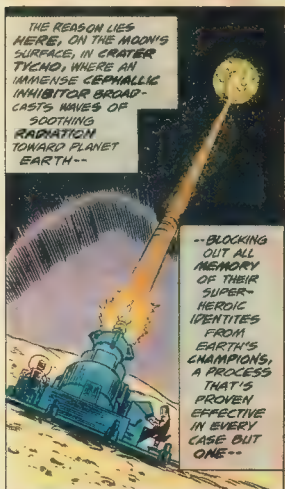
THE BATMAN
MUST BE
SEEKING THE
CAUSE OF THIS
EMERGENCY,
ALFRED. BUT
YOU'RE
RIGHT--



--GOTHAM IS HIS
HOME! THIS IS WHERE
HE'S NEEDED! I ONLY
PRAY HE GETS HERE
SOON!

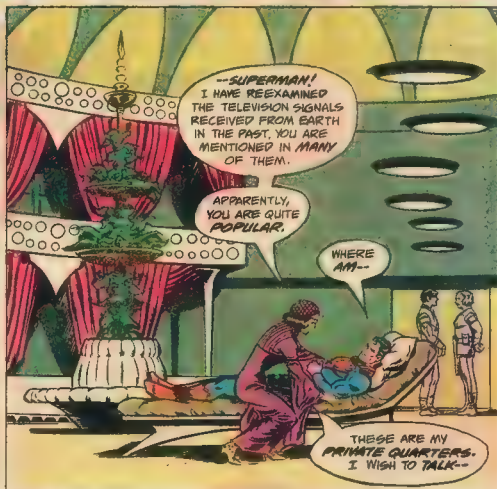
NOT AN
INAPPROPRIATE
THOUGHT--EXCEPT
FOR ONE SMALL
INCONSISTENCY:

BRUCE
WAYNE IS
THE BATMAN,
AND DOESN'T
SEEM TO
KNOW IT!



THE REASON LIES
HERE, ON THE MOON'S
SURFACE, IN CRATER
TYCHO, WHERE AN
IMMENSE CEPHALIC
INHIBITOR BROAD-
CASTS WAVES OF
SOOTHING
RADIATION
TOWARD PLANET
EARTH--

--BLOCKING
OUT ALL
MEMORY
OF THEIR
SUPER-
HEROIC
IDENTITIES
FROM
EARTH'S
CHAMPIONS,
A PROCESS
THAT'S
PROVEN
EFFECTIVE
IN EVERY
CASE BUT
ONE--



--SUPERMAN!
I HAVE REEXAMINED
THE TELEVISION SIGNALS
RECEIVED FROM EARTH
IN THE PAST, YOU ARE
MENTIONED IN MANY
OF THEM.

APPARENTLY,
YOU ARE QUITE
POPULAR.

WHERE
AM--

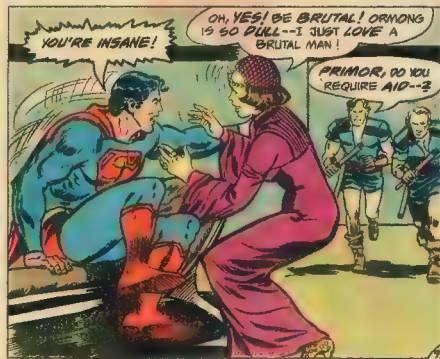
THESE ARE MY
PRIVATE QUARTERS.
I WISH TO TALK--



--UNDISTURBED!

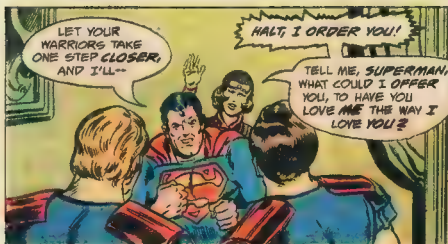
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
LADY, WHILE YOU'RE TRYING
TO KILL EVERYONE ON MY
ADOPTED PLANET--

--YOU WANT TO
SNUGGLE?



OH, YES! BE BRUTAL! ORMONG
IS SO DULL--I JUST LOVE A
BRUTAL MAN!

PRIMOR, DO YOU
REQUIRE AID--?



LET YOUR
WARRIORS TAKE
ONE STEP CLOSER,
AND I'LL--

HALT, I ORDER YOU!

TELL ME, SUPERMAN,
WHAT COULD I OFFER
YOU, TO HAVE YOU
LOVE ME THE WAY I
LOVE YOU?



FOR OPENERS--
HANDS OFF EARTH!

I SEE. IS
THERE ANYTHING
ELSE?

THE SECRET OF
YOUR POWER--THE FORCE
BEHIND YOUR TORNADO-
BEAM AND THE
OTHER WEAPONS!

THAT
COULD BE
YOURS--

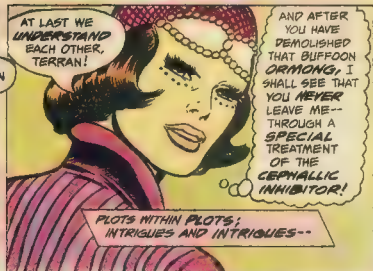


--WHEN YOU
BECOME THE
DIODE SECUNDUS--
KING TO MY
QUEEN!

DON'T YOU
ALREADY HAVE
A KING?

HE CAN BE
REMOVED--UPON
DEFEAT BY A
CHALLENGER!

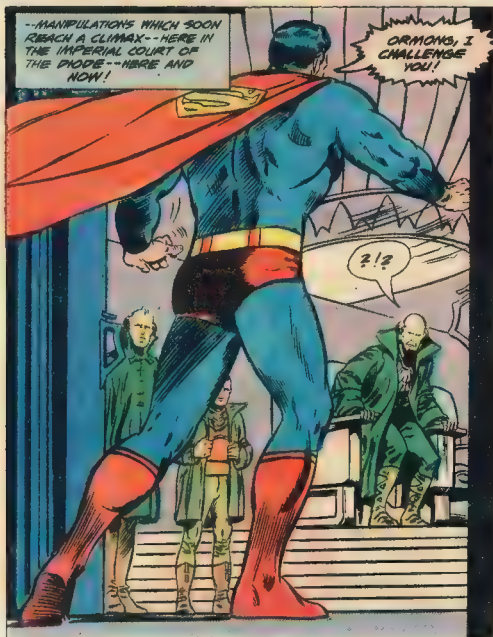
AND THAT
CHALLENGER,
OF COURSE
--IS ME?



AT LAST WE
UNDERSTAND
EACH OTHER,
TERRAN!

AND AFTER
YOU HAVE
DEMOLISHED
THAT BUFFOON
ORMONG, I
SHALL SEE THAT
YOU NEVER
LEAVE ME--
THROUGH A
SPECIAL
TREATMENT
OF THE
CEPHALLIC
INHIBITOR!

PLOTS WITHIN PLOTS;
INTRIGUES AND INTRIGUES--



--MANIPULATIONS WHICH SOON
REACH A CLIMAX--HERE IN
THE IMPERIAL COURT OF
THE DIODE--HERE AND
NOW!

ORMONG, I
CHALLENGE
YOU!

?!?



I DECLARE
YOU UNFIT TO BE
SECUNDUS--AND
BY THE TIMELESS
TRADITIONS OF
YOUR RACE, I
CHALLENGE
YOU TO PROVE
YOURSELF IN
COMBAT--

--OR RESIGN!

PATHETIC
TERRAN!
DARE YOU
INSULT ME?
VERY WELL,
WE SHALL
FIGHT, AND
BY LUNA'S
INNER
SUN--

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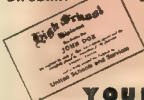
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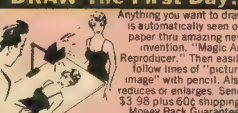
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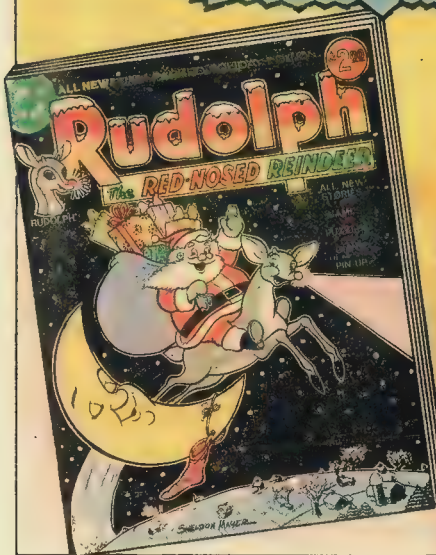
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"--I SWEAR I'LL SEE YOU DIE!"

AND THUS, WITHIN ONE LUNAR HOUR, BENEATH A TEMPORARY TRANSPARENT DOME SWIFTLY ERECTED ON THE SILENT SURFACE...

BETTER KEEP A SHARP EYE ON ORMONG'S BATTLE-AXE! IT'S FILLED WITH THE SAME ENERGY THAT'S PLAYED HAVOC WITH MY BODY BEFORE!

THAT MAKES IT THE ONE WEAPON THAT CAN DEFEAT ME!

THE CONTESTANTS ARE READY--



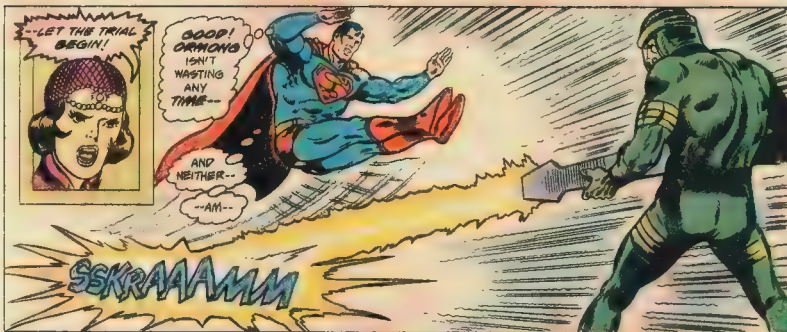
--LET THE TRIAL BEGIN!

GOOD! ORMONG ISN'T WASTING ANY TIME--

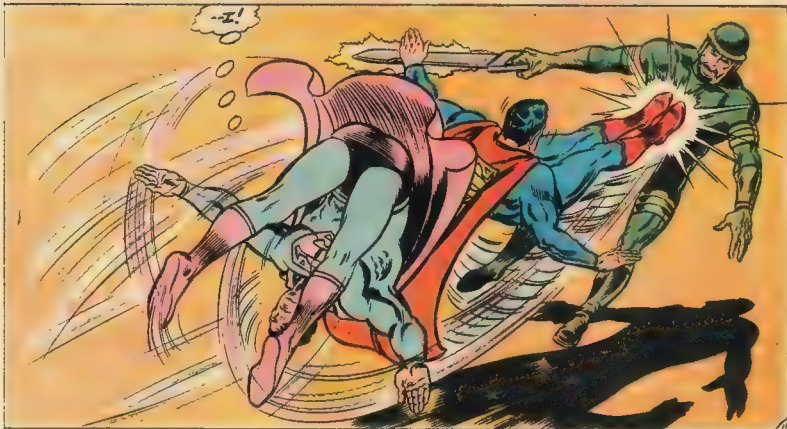
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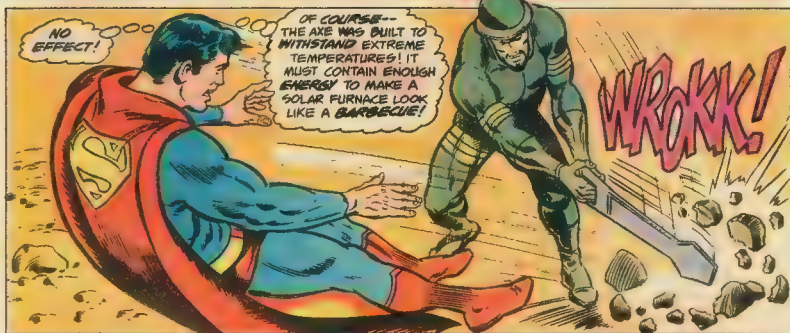
--AM--

SSKRAAAMM



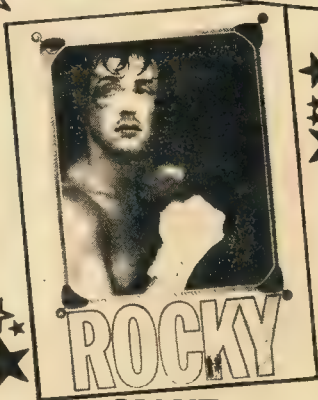
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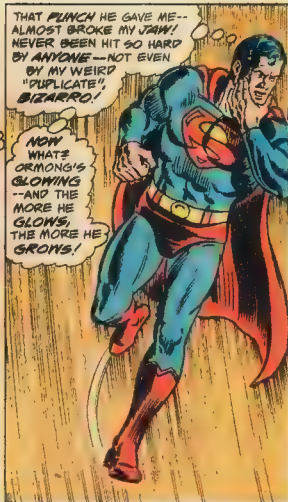
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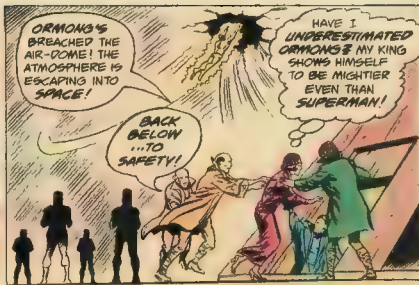




ORDINARILY, THEY'RE PROTECTED BY THEIR BATTLE ARMOR, BUT ORMONG'S NOT WEARING ARMOR! HE RECEIVED A FULL SOLAR DOSE, AND HE'S--

WAAAAH

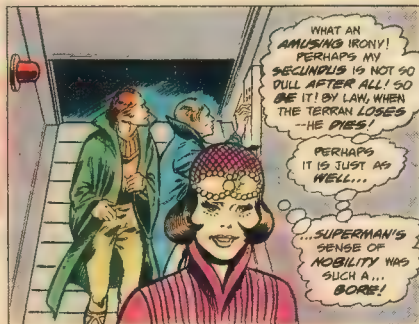
KA-CHOOM



ORMONG'S BREACHED THE AIR-DOME! THE ATMOSPHERE IS ESCAPING INTO SPACE!

BACK BELOW
...TO SAFETY!

HAVE I UNDERESTIMATED ORMONG'S? MY KING SHOWS HIMSELF TO BE MIGHTIER EVEN THAN SUPERMAN!



WHAT AN AMUSING IRONY! PERHAPS MY SECONDUS IS NOT SO DULL AFTER ALL! SO BE IT! BY LAW, WHEN THE TERRAN LOSES--HE DIES!

PERHAPS IT IS JUST AS WELL...

...SUPERMAN'S SENSE OF NOBILITY WAS SUCH A... BORE!



AND, AS THE RUNNING BATTLE CONTINUES, DRIFTING NOW TOWARD THE WAR-GOD PLANET, MARS...

ORMONG'S CAUGHT ME IN A DEATH-GRIP!

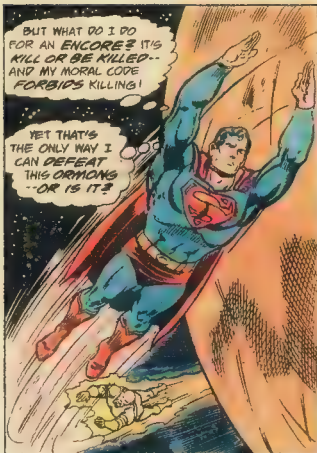
TOO TIGHT TO BREAK BY SHEER FORCE--



--SO I'LL PULL A TRICK TAUGHT ME BY THE FLASH!

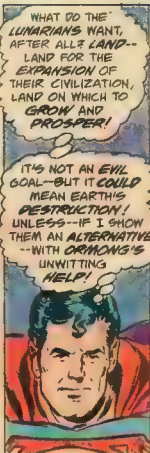
I DON'T QUITE HAVE HIS SKILL WITH SUPER-SPEED, BUT I CAN VIBRATE ULTRA-FAST--

--MAKING MY BODY TOO SLIPPERY TO HOLD!



BUT WHAT DO I DO
FOR AN ENCORE? IT'S
KILL OR BE KILLED--
AND MY MORAL CODE
FORBIDS KILLING!

YET THAT'S
THE ONLY WAY I
CAN DEFEAT
THIS ORMONG
--OR IS IT?

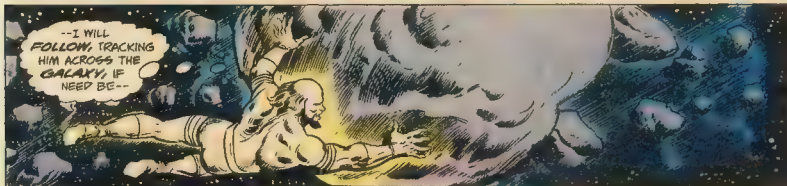


WHAT DO THE
LUNARIANS WANT,
AFTER ALL? LAND--
LAND FOR THE
EXPANSION OF
THEIR CIVILIZATION,
LAND ON WHICH TO
GROW AND
PROSPER!

IT'S NOT AN EVIL
GOAL--BUT IT COULD
MEAN EARTH'S
DESTRUCTION!
UNLESS--IF I SHOW
THEM AN ALTERNATIVE
--WITH ORMONG'S
UNWITTING
HELP!



NO MATTER
WHERE THE
TERRAN
WEAKLING FLEES
--BEYOND
MARS--THE
ASTEROID
BELT--EVEN
THE SOLAR
SYSTEM--



--I WILL
FOLLOW, TRACKING
HIM ACROSS THE
GALAXY, IF
NEED BE--



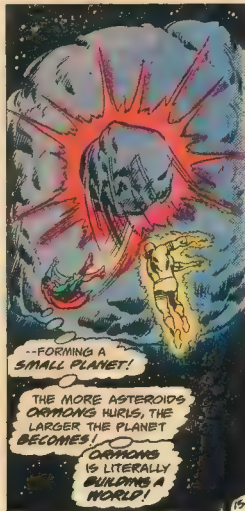
--TO HIS
DOOM!

LIKE A CHILD SLINGING MUDBALLS,
THE TRANSFORMED LUNARIAN
HEAVES ASTEROID AFTER
ASTEROID AT THE DODGING
MAN OF STEEL!...



IT'S WORKING! THAT
MADMAN IS SO BLIND WITH
FURY, HE CAN'T SEE WHAT'S
HAPPENING!

ALL THE
ASTEROIDS ARE
CRASHING TOGETHER
AS I DART OUT OF
THE WAY!



--FORMING A
SMALL PLANET!

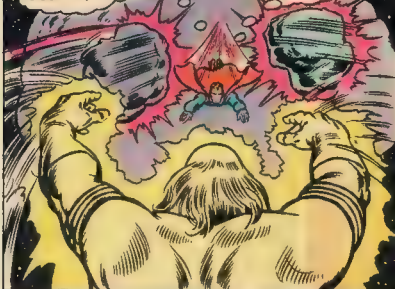
THE MORE ASTEROIDS
ORMONG HURLS, THE
LARGER THE PLANET
BECOMES!

ORMONG
IS LITERALLY
BUILDING A
WORLD!

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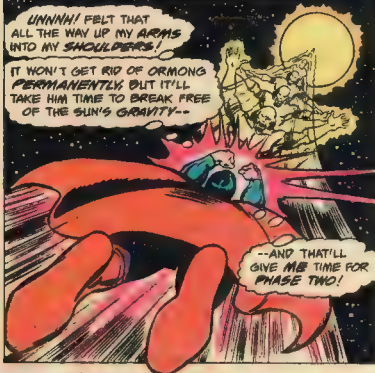


IMPACT: AND HERE THERE SOUND IN AIRLESS SPACE, THE COLLISION WOULD BE HEARD FOR A MILLION MILES...

UNNNH! FELT THAT ALL THE WAY UP MY ARMS INTO MY SHOULDERS!

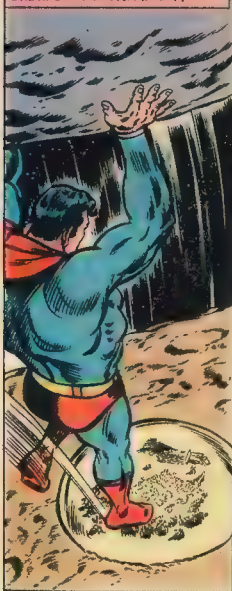
IT WON'T GET RID OF ORMONG PERMANENTLY, BUT IT'LL TAKE HIM TIME TO BREAK FREE OF THE SUN'S GRAVITY--

--AND THAT'LL GIVE ME TIME FOR PHASE TWO!



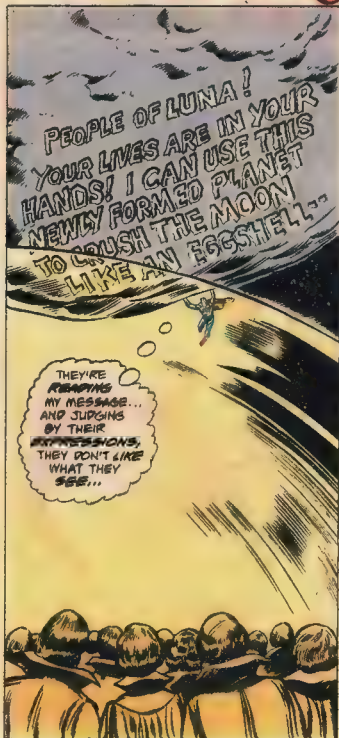
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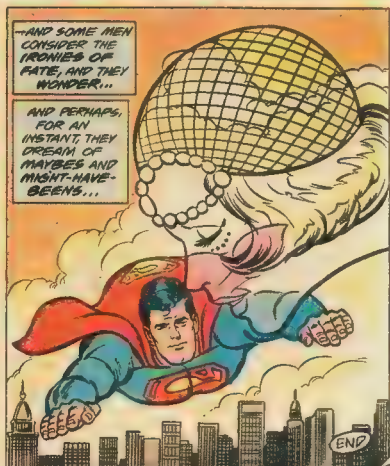
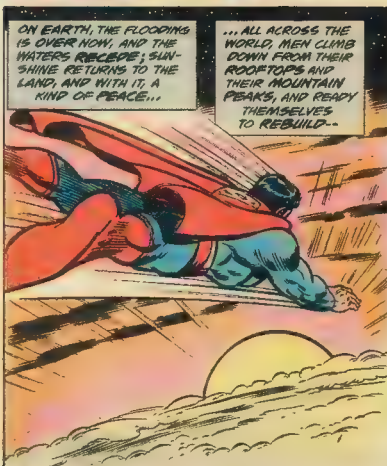
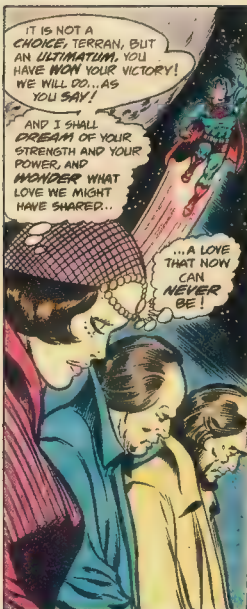
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Dear Editor:

Action #474 was your basic unusual comic mag. The cover, the art, the stories: all were other than what I've come to expect from you guys at **Action**. (Though that doesn't necessarily mean they were bad.) The cover gave the first hint of things to come. How often does Kurt Schaffenberger draw covers for **Superman** family magazines? Not very often, and I, for one, miss his crisp, clear style that is so individualistic. **Kurt** also has the knack of drawing just the right thing to pique my curiosity about the interior content. **Dr. Light** picking Clark Kent out of seven **Superman** is too thought-provoking to pass up. Add to that the setting of Johnny Nevada's **Midnight Show** and you've got a cover that is impossible to ignore.

"Will the Real **Superman** Please Show up?" was what Cary Bates writes when he's not doing multi-parters: short, solid tales that can be wrapped up in ten or twelve pages. **Dr. Light** is always coming up with formidable super-weapons, but this one takes the cake. A photon-displacer beam that will reveal **Superman's** secret identity is one heck of an idea. Now, here comes the really unusual part. Rather than play **Light's** menace straight, Cary went for a semi-tongue-in-cheek approach which, surprisingly, worked. **Supes** handled the bad doctor with such ease that it looked like child's play. Then, to top it off, he left **Light** tied up rather ungracefully for the police to find instead of delivering him personally.

The thing that intrigued me most about the story was the gathering of men suspected of being **Superman**. I wasn't aware that so many men had been under suspicion at one time or another. **Rook**, **Stirling** and **Mike Talbot** were new names to me, so I appreciate the reference to **Rock's** past, but would like to know where **Mike** came in. What I wasn't aware of was that **Olsen**, **Lombard**, **Nevada** and **Reed** were mistaken for **Superman**. Maybe you could give references for the latter three as you did for **Jimmy**? (Hint, hint!)

The **Private Life of Clark Kent** episode, "One for the Money," had a very different effect on me. It was designed to give the reader a chuckle and that's exactly what it did. **Benny's** attempts at getting **Clark's** ticket were not especially funny, but the fact that he was trying to steal from **Superman** was. Then, when **Clark** decided to get back at the "dip," things really started to get funny. His clumsiness is no longer embarrassing to watch, but amusing, because it's so obviously an act. The final page was the highlight, due to the way **Clark** set **Benny** up. Yet the page was also sad, with **Clark's** remembrance of his orphanage. **Bob Toomey** earned my respect with this tale.

Mike White
207 W. East
Mackinac, Ill. 61755

(Johnny and Greg have both deliberately impersonated **Superman** to help him out, while **Steve** was mistaken for the **Man of Steel** by **Karb-Brak**—whom we saw again in issues 475-8. As for **Mike**, I'm afraid we threw you a curve there. He has never appeared before. I might mention, however, that many others have been mis-

taken for **Supes** in the past—including **Perry White**, the original **Metallo**, **Steve Allen**, **Bruce Wayne** and—**Lana Lang**, who as a teen was mistaken for **Superboy**—**E.N.B.**)

Dear Editor:

Action #474 was a great disappointment! **Dr. Light** has the potential to be one of the most lethal and spectacular of DC's villains. But **Cary Bates** and **Kurt Schaffenberger** sure don't know him like we do!

The cover brought to mind great story ideas: I envisioned a miniaturized version of **Dr. Light's** original projector sending all the "**Superman**" hurtling to different bizarre planets. **Clark-Superman** would have to rescue them, leaving **Light** free to plot against the other **Justice Leaguers**. With these visions dancing in my head, I opened the mag and read Mr. Bates' version. First, I believe **Dr. Light** is solely interested in eliminating the **Justice League**. Discovering their secret identities means nothing to him. Second, if he did suspect any of the "**Superman** panel" of being the **Man of Steel**, he would have been ruthless enough to eliminate them all just to cover all bases. Now, that's the **Dr. Light** I know and love!

But I have to admit **Clark Kent** is getting much more interesting. His **Private Life** story was the highlight of the issue!

Michael Christiansen
704 S. Third St.
Rockford, Ill 61108

(Next time, read the story more carefully. **Dr. Light** only wanted to learn **Superman's** identity so he could catch his enemy off guard—and kill him! Also, he didn't suspect any of the panelists of being **Supes**—he expected to find him in the audience—**E.N.B.**)

Dear Julie and Nelson:

Cary Bates has done it again! It never fails! As soon as I write a letter panning one of his stories, in the next issue there is a good tale, contradicting everything I said. You really know how to drive a reader nuts!

After all my griping about Cary falling into a rut with a three-issue formula, he turns around and gives us a clever eleven-pager. I've always been a sucker for these parody-of-real-people tales and **Action** #474 was no exception. Even if the whole story was nothing but an excuse to have **Clark** dress up as **Supie** and not be suspected, it was worth it. And if you're going to do lighter stories in this mag, I'd rather they were subtle comedy with a little action thrown in, as this one was, than a semi-serious story which winds up silly like last issue's.

The **Schaffenberger/Blaisdell** art provided just the right touch, which is not surprising, since **Schaffenberger** is at his best on humorous situations. The back-up story was also nicely complemented by **Kurt's** amusing style. Page three's scene of **Clark** backing away from the dog was worth the 35¢ alone. "One for the Money" was an otherwise unremarkable **LoCK**, but **Bob Toomey** showed himself fully capable of turning out accurate characterizations and clever dialogue.

Beth Montelone
13 Rowley St., Apt. 3
Rochester, N.Y. 14607

(So here's hoping you've been enjoying the new developments **Bob's** come up with in his **Krypto** stories in **Superman Family**. And I don't recommend the mag solely because the editor happens to be—**E. Nelson Bridwell**.)

A few weeks ago, my local druggist engaged me in friendly conversation.

"Are you still putting out that kids' magazine?" he asked.

"No," I replied. "I'm now the publisher of DC Comics. You know — Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman."

"Of course!" he exclaimed, brightening visibly. "Why, that must be a wonderful job."

I thought about the conversation afterwards. It was one I'd had many times before. Whenever anyone seemed baffled as to what DC Comics really meant, I could dispel his or her doubts instantly by uttering the illuminating incantation: "You know, Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman."

The truth, I reflected, is that to almost everybody (except millions of dedicated readers) the super-heroes are the comic books. But what about *G.I. Combat*, *Sgt. Rock*, *Unknown Soldier*, and *Men of War*? And what about the mystery books—*Ghosts*, *Witching Hour*, *Secrets of the Haunted House*, *The Unexpected*, *House of Secrets* and *House of Mystery*?

Here we were, eagerly at work expanding our mystery line-up. Not only were we reviving such spectral luminaries as *Deadman* and the *Phantom Stranger* for the fall, or launching a *Ghosts Special* for September, or planning a novel-length thriller to celebrate *House of Secrets* #150, but we were rubbing our hands together over the way a wholly new mystery title, *Doorway To Nightmare*, was shaping up for its debut in October. And, as usual, all of these books were involving some of our most extraordinary talent: Berni Wrightson, Mike Kaluta, David Michelinie, Geffrey Conway, Michael

DC PubliShorial

it's a mystery...

Fleisher, Marty Pasko, among others.

There is no doubt that mystery books hold a fascination for readers and creators alike. There are fewer constraints than in other genres and therefore many more surprises. No costumed super-hero delimits a cover idea by his requisite appearance. No story is bound, except by the writer's own choices, to any place or time, to certain obligatory backgrounds, or to equally obligatory supporting characters. A writer of capable imagination can fashion a story from whole cloth. An artist, unrestrained by the visual conventions which must be followed in any super-hero book, can make his drawing as highly stylized or deeply personal as he might wish.

But the real appeal of the mystery books must lie in the vividly human characterizations that are essential to the form. Interestingly, both the super-hero books and the mysteries derive their very existence from an ongoing clash between good and evil. But the clash in super-hero books is mythic. Not only are the super-heroes larger than life, but so also are their foes (How could they be otherwise?). The super-heroes are beings who in our dreams we might like to be but never can, for they are supra-human not only in physical prowess but in moral strength as well.

On the other hand, the central characters in a mystery tale can be the people next door. Their emotions are not ones that we necessarily would like to have, but in our more honest moments must admit to. The mystery figures are prey to arrogance, jealousy, self-delusion, treachery, and guilt. When violence erupts, it is not cosmic but alarmingly commonplace.

Often, yearning for super powers to catapult themselves out of their very humanness, the mystery characters will invoke the occult. But ultimately, the same human limitations they have sought to overcome entrap them in an even more wretched downfall. The mystery tales can jolt us in a way the super-hero sagas can't, for they touch not on our noblest aspirations but on our basest impulses.

Of course, the stories are to some extent determined by the Comics Code which dictates that no crime can go unpunished. Naturally, this can be gratifying, reaffirming our sense of right and wrong and restoring order just as the super-hero comics do.

But some of the best mystery stories are those that reek of evil-doing not punishable by law, where all the ends are not neatly tied up and the reader is not left off the hook.

In addition to the unfettered storytelling that characterizes both the writing and the art, the mystery books present us with compelling and oft-times devastating metaphors for our existence. If you've been locked into super-hero books, you ought to give mysteries a shot. The creativity is there, and so is the power.

Wishing you all the best—

Jenette

dc profiles number 24

larry hama

Larry Hama comes to DC Comics as an editor with rather strange credentials. He is proficient as both a writer and an artist... as well as being an accomplished actor.

Larry's interest in comics began while he was attending New York's High School of Art and Design. It was there that he met two young comic book fans named Ralph Reese and Frank Brunner...

After a year in England, Larry eased into the unstructured, underground comics medium before he was drafted.

Upon his discharge, Larry drew his only story for DC (until now, that is), while also pencilling *Iron Fist* and *Ka-Zar* for Marvel Comics.

Luck was with Larry and he landed a job as assistant to Wally Wood. He spent some time writing *Cannon* and

Sally Forth for *Overseas Weekly*.

After his stint with Wood, Larry moved on to Continuity Associates, headed by Neal Adams and Dick Giordano, where he became one of the original Crusty Bunkers. And, for the short-lived Atlas Comics Group, Larry wrote two series: *Planet of the Vampires* and *Wulf the Barbarian*; the latter he created, wrote and pencilled.

In addition to all the time he spends behind the typewriter and drawing board, Larry has put in many long, hard hours as an actor. He was in the original Broadway cast of *Pacific Overtures*, as well as the

road company of the same play. He was most recently seen in an episode of *M*A*S*H*, cleverly disguised as a North Korean spy.

Joining DC's staff as an editor several months ago, Larry has his work cut out for him with such series as *Wonder Woman*, *Mr. Miracle* and *Jonah Hex*. As a writer, Larry is going to set the comics industry on its ear with a top secret project, anticipated for release next year.

Larry feels that what makes comics work is "the ability of the writer and the artist to make their fantasies work on paper. It's the personal factor that makes comics come alive. You've got to really be there!"

Judging from Larry's work in the past, he's all ready there. Judging from his plans for the future, Larry is destined to go far beyond!



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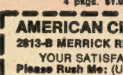
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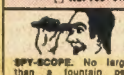
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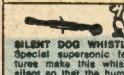
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Discover the world of the great explorers

You can be there when Columbus discovers America. You can sail around the world with Magellan and stand with Marco Polo before the Emperor of China. Carter's Draws-a-Lot Crayons® Explorer Poster Kit offer lets you share the danger and excitement of six of history's most daring explorers.

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2

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Cardboard Carpentry shows you how to make everything from castles and robots to monster masks out of everyday boxes and packages. It costs only \$1.00 with the coupon you get with a Carter's Stix-A-Lot Glue Stick. And every copy comes with a set of Carter's Draws-a-Lot Crayons. Get your Stix-A-Lot with the *Cardboard Carpentry* offer today.



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